

Preparatory Process for the Third International Conference on FfD
First Drafting Session: Monitoring, Data and Follow-up
(as delivered)

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Data has transformed the way the world works over the last decade. There is now more data generated in the last 2 days than in recorded history until the year 2003. Data -- in many forms and generated by statistical units, citizens, private firms and other sources -- can give us a new picture. For instance with geospatial mapping we can now see almost to the tree where deforestation is happening and work with companies, governments and communities to halt it. This development holds the opportunity to mobilize all actors toward generating, sharing and importantly using data to enable decisions and actions that will support our sustainable development agenda. This is not without risks, and concerns over the use and abuse of data should be heeded, but it does not lessen the imperative to use data for the societal benefits it has proven it can generate in many fields from health to agriculture to oceans. Importantly, data is not exclusively about monitoring, but remains crucial for the effective implementation of all aspects of financing for development. Data is the lifeblood of a modern economy, required by policymakers and investors alike.

Addis must establish the political momentum and support for devoting resources for compiling reliable and usable data. The availability of reliable data at both the national and global levels will enable the international community to track progress, understand trade-offs, create mutual accountability, and help governments make informed decisions. It will come and should come from a wide range of public and private sources, and be open to analysis and interpretation by that diverse set of actors.

We also believe that evidence-based decision-making should underpin the sustainable development agenda, including by integrating data into the policy-making process. For countries with limited institutional capacity, we should signal our willingness to ensure they have the tools necessary to turn data into useful information. And on the international level, to more effectively coordinate development efforts, we must know what flows are available and where they are going. That should include foreign private investment, domestic resources, ODA, philanthropy, other official financing, and South-South cooperation.

Third, data and transparency go hand in hand. The outcome document should highlight practical interventions at the national level like universal publication of government budgets, transparency around natural resource extraction, and freedom of information legislation. Intergovernmental initiatives such as the Open Government Partnership, the International Aid Transparency Initiative, which has been mentioned several times this morning, the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative or the Global Initiative for Fiscal Transparency, among others, have supported such interventions and give governments better tools to respond to the needs of their citizens.

Some key principals on follow up and review. It will also be imperative to bring a fresh perspective to how we collect and utilize data to review outcomes. Our approach should take into account and utilize these existing mechanisms to the maximum extent, rather than start from scratch and rely solely on the UN system. Our discussions in this area should be undertaken in as open and inclusive a manner as possible to draw upon the expertise of the revolutionary advances in data architecture and analysis.

We have heard the suggestion that the backbone of an effective monitoring framework should be at the national level and we agree. At the international level, the review process should maintain a longer-term orientation, focused on comparable data, vigorous thematic analysis, identification of gaps and challenges in implementation, and knowledge sharing.

This would entail constructive involvement of the full spectrum of stakeholders to identify solutions and foster positive learning and cooperation that improves the performances of governments on sustainable development.